



Rhagoriaeth i bawb – Excellence for all

Arolygiaeth Ei Mawrhydi dros Addysg
a Hyfforddiant yng Nghymru

Her Majesty's Inspectorate
for Education and Training in Wales

A report on

**Hiraddug PG
Hiraddug CP School
Thomas Avenue
Dyserth
LL18 6AN**

Date of inspection: March 2014

by

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Reporting Inspector**

for

**Estyn, Her Majesty's Inspectorate for Education
and Training in Wales**

During each inspection, inspectors aim to answer three key questions:

Key Question 1: How good are the outcomes?

Key Question 2: How good is provision?

Key Question 3: How good are leadership and management?

Inspectors also provide an overall judgement on the setting's current performance and on its prospects for improvement.

In these evaluations, inspectors use a four-point scale:

Judgement	What the judgement means
Excellent	Many strengths, including significant examples of sector-leading practice
Good	Many strengths and no important areas requiring significant improvement
Adequate	Strengths outweigh areas for improvement
Unsatisfactory	Important areas for improvement outweigh strengths

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Context

Hiraddug Playgroup is an English-medium setting in Dyserth, Denbighshire. It is an integral part of Ysgol Hiraddug, but is run as an independent provision. Most children attending have neither advantaged nor disadvantaged backgrounds. They live in the village of Dyserth or the surrounding rural area.

The setting provides sessional day care and education for children aged between two and four years old. It is registered for 26 children and offers morning sessions on weekdays during school terms. At the time of the inspection there were 18 children on roll, including four three-year-olds that are funded up to 10 hours per week by the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership. All children attending are English speaking and British born. None are from ethnic minorities. No families speak Welsh at home. A very few children receive extra support for learning.

The Care and Social Service Inspectorate for Wales last inspected the setting in June 2013 and Estyn in January 2008.

Summary

The Setting's current performance	Good
The Setting's prospects for improvement	Good

Current performance

The setting's performance is good because:

- a very good range of stimulating learning experiences is provided;
- teaching is enthusiastic and skilfully promotes incidental learning;
- high quality support and guidance ensures children's health and wellbeing;
- the learning environment is inclusive, nurtures positive relationships and is very well resourced; and
- partnerships with parents, the school and the local authority are effective.

Prospects for improvement

Prospects for improvement are good because:

- the setting is well led and managed;
- leadership sets high expectations and successfully promotes a teamwork ethos;
- provision to develop children's skills has improved since the last inspection; and
- the setting improvement plan identifies appropriate goals that provide a good basis for further improvement.

Recommendations

R1. Refine planning to include more detailed learning objectives and provide clear guidance for teaching;

R2. Use assessment information to plan next steps in learning and ensure appropriate levels of challenge;

R3. Sharpen the focus on implementing key goals in the setting improvement plan and embed self-evaluation.

What happens next?

The setting will draw up an action plan which shows how it is going to address the recommendations. The local authority will monitor the setting's progress.

Main findings

Key Question 1: How good are outcomes?

N/A

Standards: N/A

There is no report on children's progress, standards in their skills development, Welsh language and wellbeing. This is because the number of relevant children at the time of the inspection was too few to report on without identifying individual children.

Wellbeing: N/A

There is no report on children's progress, standards in their skills development, Welsh language and wellbeing. This is because the number of relevant children at the time of the inspection was too few to report on without identifying individual children.

Key Question 2: How good is provision?

Good

Learning experiences: Good

A very good range of learning experiences successfully promotes progress towards the Foundation Phase outcomes. Planning is well structured, promotes progression and is in line with children's needs. The provision strongly promotes positive relationships and respect and appropriately develops awareness of other cultures. All areas of learning are well represented through imaginative and well-resourced activities.

Planning provides a good framework for long and short-term provision. Broad themes are carefully chosen, such as the current focus on life cycles. These provide relevant contexts for children to develop their skills. Fortnightly planning is detailed and guides the provision in areas of play appropriately. Practitioners are flexible in implementing this planning. There is a very good range of indoor and outdoor activities and these build appropriately on children's prior knowledge and skills. Adult led tasks are well defined with details of the learning objectives recorded. However, too few details of how other tasks can be enhanced are included.

Appropriate emphasis is placed on developing skills in literacy, numeracy and communication. For example, a good variety of role-play activities are used effectively to promote speaking and listening skills. Similarly, children's counting skills are developed well, such as when shopping in the flower shop. The focus on information and communication technology (ICT) skills is appropriate. Good opportunities are planned to role-play with everyday applications, such as the mobile phone and the checkout in the shop. Children use a camera and draw colourful images on the computer screen.

The Foundation Phase framework is used well to check that the planned activities promote relevant skills and that all areas of learning are covered. This helps to ensure appropriate progression in learning, but fortnightly planning doesn't always record sufficient details of how and what the children might learn.

The provision for Welsh language development and to promote awareness of the history and culture of Wales is good. Welsh is spoken incidentally within daily routines and activities are planned, such as to celebrate St David's Day.

Teaching: Good

Teaching is enthusiastic, fosters good relationships and skilfully promotes opportunities for incidental learning. Practitioners manage and support children's learning well and have high expectations of their behaviour and achievement. They provide good models of language and use a range of teaching strategies well.

Practitioners have good knowledge and understanding of child development and the Foundation Phase. Daily routines are well structured and there is a good balance between practitioner led and child-selected activities. Practitioners know the tasks they are to lead or support and successfully promote high levels of engagement. However, their understanding of how to develop the learning objectives for tasks is less well developed. Children are given plenty of time to complete tasks and practitioners intervene appropriately when needed. This was clearly evident, for example, when children prepared vegetables to make soup.

Practitioners are enthusiastic and often use questioning and praise well to promote learning. In particular, they develop children's communication and social skills effectively. Learning through play is strongly encouraged and teaching builds well on a very good range of indoor and outdoor activities. Opportunities for choice and independence are often well promoted.

Systems for assessment are developing well, but the use of assessment information to plan next steps in learning and ensure appropriate challenge is at an early stage. Useful procedures for assessment are becoming established. Practitioners record achievements, such as sequencing the lifecycle of a frog, and post them on the 'learning tree' to celebrate achievement with the child. This information, together with annotated photographs is collated in individual learning records. These provide an informative profile of progress across areas of learning.

Parents are kept well informed about their child's progress before and after sessions. Individual learning records are also discussed with parents before children transfer to school.

Care, support and guidance: Good

The setting provides very good care support and guidance. Strong emphasis is placed on promoting children's health and wellbeing. The provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good. This successfully promotes positive values such as fairness, honesty and respect for others.

Arrangements to assure children's health and wellbeing are implemented consistently. Healthy eating is appropriately promoted through the choice of foods offered at snack time and children enjoy regular opportunities for energetic play. The strong emphasis placed on personal development successfully promotes good behaviour.

Children are strongly encouraged to develop a sense of curiosity about the natural world and they respond with a sense of awe and wonder, for example when watching chicks hatch and tadpoles develop. They are sensitively encouraged to quietly reflect on their experiences each day in the setting.

Children are positively encouraged to distinguish between right and wrong and they are given clear boundaries for behaviour. Social skills are well promoted, such as taking turns and sharing resources, and at snack time children help serve the food. There is strong emphasis on positive relationships and showing consideration for others.

Children's awareness of different cultures is well promoted. Christian and other festivals are celebrated. For example, the children tasted Chinese foods when marking Chinese New Year. Visits, such as to the library and a visit by a vet help engage children with the local community. Children are also encouraged to act sustainably through recycling and composting.

The setting has good procedures to provide children with specialist support when needed. The arrangements to support and integrate children who need extra help with their learning are effective.

Established procedures ensure the setting is safe and secure. Appropriate risk assessments are implemented and members of staff have a valid criminal records disclosure. The setting has an appropriate policy and has procedures for safeguarding. These arrangements give no cause for concern.

Learning environment: Good

The setting is an inclusive learning environment where children's individual qualities are valued. Equal access to the curriculum is well promoted. Practitioners treat all children with respect. They are supportive, foster good relationships and take good account of children's backgrounds. This helps ensure children feel safe and free from undue anxiety.

Practitioners encourage sensitivity and understanding towards others and skillfully manage occasional incidents of challenging behaviour. Equal opportunities are well promoted, but arrangements to ensure any future child with disabilities attending the setting does not suffer disadvantage are not sufficiently formalised.

There are sufficient appropriately qualified and experienced practitioners for the number of children. The provision of good quality learning resources is sufficient to provide for the Foundation Phase curriculum. The range of well-resourced outdoor learning activities provided is very good. The accommodation is suitable, used to good effect and is well maintained. There is adequate storage, but resources are not

always well ordered and accessible. Effective use is made of the local environment, including community facilities such as the library and park, to enhance existing facilities.

Key Question 3: How good are leadership and management?	Good
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Leadership: Good

The setting is well led and managed on a day-to-day basis. Leadership is successful in promoting a teamwork ethos, provides clear direction and maintains high expectations based on traditional values. The supervisor skilfully builds on practitioners' individual strengths to enhance their role in managing the setting.

Practitioners have a good understanding of their roles and responsibilities. A strong sense of purpose and shared values are embedded in the life and work of the setting. An appropriate range of policies and procedures are in place. Leadership successfully sustains improvements in educational provision. Day-to-day routines are well structured and the organisation of the playgroup is effective. The management committee is strongly supportive and is kept well informed. However, its role in strategic planning is less well developed.

Practitioners contribute to an annual appraisal. This process has encouraged practitioners to enhance their qualifications, but it does not result in formalised targets.

The setting takes forward national and local priorities well. The provision embraces well the Foundation Phase philosophy and approach. This is particularly evident in the provision for outdoor learning. There is good emphasis on combating disadvantage, promoting equality and healthy lifestyles and raising awareness of sustainability.

Improving quality: Adequate

Self-evaluation involves all practitioners and is conducted annually. The process analyses strengths and weaknesses in provision and identifies relevant areas for improvement. These provide a good basis for further improvement. Appropriate account is taken of the views of parents through questionnaires and there is a reflective culture among practitioners. However, procedures to monitor the implementation of improvement strategies and to meet the targets in the setting improvement plan lack rigour. There is little evidence of prioritising key educational goals and few evaluations of progress are recorded.

The track record of improvement since the last inspection is mixed with strong evidence of improvements in the provision for skills in literacy, numeracy, Welsh and ICT, but progress in improving planning and assessment has been too slow. However, recent developments in these aspects are having a positive impact on learning and teaching.

Partnership working: Good

The setting has strong partnerships with parents and carers that encourage trust and confidence. Induction arrangements are well established. Parents receive an informative booklet when their child joins the setting and regular newsletters provide further information about the setting. Friendly day-to-day contacts encourage the informal exchange of information. The setting seeks the views of parents through an annual questionnaire to which the response is very positive.

Partnership working with Ysgol Hiraddug is well established and benefits the children's transfer to the nursery. The headteacher maintains appropriate oversight of the setting's work. A recently introduced initiative in which a nursery teacher provides advice and support for learning and teaching in the setting is developing well.

The setting has established links with schools and colleges in the locality. It regularly provides placements for work experience and for students undertaking childcare courses. The partnership with the local authority and other agencies, including the Wales Pre-school Playgroups Association, is beneficial. The impact of support and quality assurance provided by the local authority is appropriate.

Resource management: Good

The management of resources is well considered. Both practitioners and learning resources are used well to interest and motivate children. Very good use is made of the varied and extensive outdoor provision. Practitioners benefit from attending professional development courses, such as in numeracy and Welsh. However, opportunities to share good practice through visits to other settings have yet to be arranged.

The impact of resources on learning and teaching is discussed informally. The supervisor orders new resources, but there are no formalised procedures to evaluate their impact. However, the prudent management of finance ensures good quality provision is maintained.

The supervisor ensures the funding and fees received are deployed efficiently. Procedures to monitor income and expenditure are secure, but they are not sufficiently formalised. The management committee receives independently audited accounts annually.

Taking account of the positive impact of the provision on children's learning, the setting provides good value for money.

Appendix 1

Stakeholder satisfaction report

Responses to parent questionnaires

The number of responses received were fewer than 10. No data will be shown.

Appendix 2

The inspection team / reporting inspector – delete as appropriate

Mr Michael T. Ridout	Reporting Inspector
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Copies of the report

Copies of this report are available from the setting and from the Estyn website (www.estyn.gov.uk)

Glossary of terms

Areas of Learning	<p>These are the seven areas that make up the Foundation Phase curriculum in English-medium settings. (Welsh-medium settings are not required to teach Welsh language development as this is already the language of the setting.) The Areas of Learning are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • personal and social development, wellbeing and cultural diversity • language, literacy and communications skills • mathematical development • Welsh language development • knowledge and understanding of the world • physical development • creative development
CSSIW	<p>Care and Social Services Inspectorate Wales (CSSIW) is a division of the Department of Public Services and Performance in the Welsh Government.</p>
Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership (EYDCP)	<p>This local authority partnership approves settings as providers of education. It also has the power to withdraw funding from settings which do not comply with the partnership's conditions of registration.</p>
Foundation Phase	<p>The Welsh Government initiative that aims to provide a balanced and varied curriculum to meet the different developmental needs of young children from 3 to 7 years of age.</p>
Foundation Phase child development assessment profile (CDAP)	<p>Foundation Phase on-entry assessment profile; a statutory requirement in schools from September 2011 and settings from September 2012.</p>
Local authority advisory teacher	<p>These teachers provide regular support, guidance and training to non-maintained settings which provide education for three and four year olds.</p>
Mudiad Meithrin	<p>A voluntary organisation, which aims to give every young child in Wales the opportunity to benefit from early years services and experiences through the medium of Welsh.</p>

Professional Association for Childcare and Early Years (PACEY)	This is a professional membership association working with registered childminders to ensure local high quality home-based childcare, play, learning and family support.
National Day Nurseries Association (NDNA)	This organisation which aims to improve the development and education of children in their early years, by providing support services to members.
Wales Pre-school Providers Association (WPPA)	An independent voluntary organisation providing community based pre-school childcare and education.